The Tourist and the Fisherman

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An American tourist was at the pier of a small coastal Mexican village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked.

Inside the small boat were several large tuna. The tourist complimented the fisherman on the quality of his fish and asked how long it took to catch them.

The fisherman replied, “Only a little while.”

The tourist then asked, “Why didn’t you stay out longer and catch more fish?”

The fisherman said, “With this I have more than enough to support my family’s needs.”

The tourist then asked, “But what do you do with the rest of your time?”

The fisherman said, “I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take siesta with my wife, Maria, stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play guitar with my amigos, I have a full and busy life.”

The tourist scoffed, “I can help you. You should spend more time fishing, and with the proceeds, buy a bigger boat. Then, with the proceeds from the bigger boat you could buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman you would sell directly to the processor; eventually opening your own cannery. You would control the product, processing and distribution. You could leave this small coastal fishing village and move to Mexico City, then Los Angeles and eventually New York where you could run your ever-expanding enterprise.”

The fisherman asked, “But, how long will this all take?”

The tourist replied, “15 to 20 years.”

“But what then?” asked the fisherman.

The tourist laughed and said, “That’s the best part. When the time is right you would sell your company stock to the public and become very rich. You would make millions!”

“Millions? Then what?”

The tourist said, “Then you would retire. Move to a small coastal fishing village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you could sip wine and play your guitar with your amigos.”

**Questions**

1) In one paragraph, explain the difference between the values of the fisherman and the tourist.

2) In one paragraph, explain what life experiences may have influenced the fisherman’s values and perspectives.

3) In one paragraph, explain what life experiences may have influenced the tourist’s values and perspectives.

4) In one paragraph, explain which way of living, in your view, is the wiser way. Why do you believe this?